

Press-Herald

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REID L. BUNDY Managing Editor

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For Painful Tax Bites

This year a great many income taxpayers were stunned and angered by the fact that they owed more than they had expected when April 15 rolled around. The reason lies in the recent tax cut. As passed by Congress, the cut was spread over a two-year period. But the entire reduction in withholding was made at once. So, in innumerable instances, the sum withheld was well below the amount of the tax.

Now it is planned to readjust the withholding percentages, in order to make the income tax less painful. That may seem like a fine idea. But the Birmingham, Alabama, Post Herald views the matter very differently. It thinks the tax should be made more painful, rather than less so. Here is its reasoning:

"When taxes are withheld at the source, the money never really seems to belong to the individual involved. It is just a bookkeeping transaction, in which funds pass from the employer directly to the Government.

"Taxes paid in cash, however, represent real money out of pocket. They stand for trips not taken, clothes not bought, appliance purchases postponed. And they tend to make a man look skeptically at what the Government is doing with his tax dollars . . .

"We have nothing against the withholding principle as such. But if Uncle Sam's tax bite doesn't hurt a little bit, you'll never realize it is YOUR money he is spending and you should."

It looks as if the Post Herald really has something there!

OTHERS SAY:

A Slight Confusion

The news from California's specialty crop farms being what it tragically is, we pass along the text of a letter sent to Labor Secretary W. Willard Wirtz by a non-farm California couple:

"Being slightly confused by your stand on the California bracero program, we respectfully seek clarification of the implication that there is an ample supply of hungry and qualified stoop labor in the state. If your \$1.40 hourly wage is relevant, why is it not now attracting that needy labor pool to the farms? And why no adequate preparation on your part for handling the harvest crisis so long predicted by California farmers if you persisted in your unfortunate stand?"

"We are interested, too, in how you feel about the cannery and other workers left unemployed because crops are not being picked by the domestic unemployed for whom you express such earnest concern.

"As consumers we hardly expect similar concern from you, but we would welcome a public clarification of your reasoning."

No, we didn't write the letter; but like a great many Californians, we've been thinking very much along the same lines.—California Feature Service

We Quote...

"I've a strange attitude that if anyone else can do a thing so can I."—Henry Rasmussen, Mill Valley artist and do-it-yourself home builder.

"I'm just a small chief with a long name."—Napoleone Tuiteleleapaga Fofogaoali, Samoan chief attending Loyola Law School.

"I believe a supine legislature, which can be shoved around at will, does not contribute either to party harmony or the people's welfare."—Assembly Speaker Jesse M. Unruh.

"Whining self pity in the midst of privilege should not be catered to as though it were the expression of an outraged conscience."—Dr. Kingman Brewster, Yale president at San Francisco alumni conference, on student protests.

"We have been turning from freedom to an Americanized socialism without being fully aware of what we are giving up—like the bird that traded its feather for a worm."—Paul L. Fisher, Redondo Beach.

"If a communist is to be allowed to speak on our college and university campuses, there should be a well qualified person there to answer."—Mrs. J. E. Morin, Sepulveda.

A Tragedy of Errors by Jerry Marcus



"Wouldn't it be better to get your horn fixed?"

Bad driving manners contribute heavily to highway casualties.

Crime Is "Guerilla Warfare"

—WITH KILLERS AND LOOTERS ATTACKING EVERY COMMUNITY IN AMERICA.

—AND IT'S THIS SHIELD THAT PROTECTS YOUR FAMILY AND MINE!



ROYCE BRIER

Apartheid System Dooms South Africans for Life

If you would learn what amazing absurdities arise when a nation exists in fear and suspicion of its inhabitants, consider the case of Frederick Prager, South African.

Mr. Prager is a white man but is opposed to some of the measures of apartheid, by which the ruling whites segregate non-whites, consisting of blacks (Bantus), coloreds (mixed) and Asians, mostly of Indian stock. The government has had more trouble with white antagonists than with non-whites, because the whites have some rights — but not too many.

Last year Prager was among many whites arrested under a Draconian law permitting 90-day detention without trial or confrontation. But Prager was tried and acquitted last December, though this did not spare him a current five-year house arrest.

A few days ago he petitioned to marry Mrs. Ruth Katz (and surprise) his petition was granted. She had previously been permitted to visit him to discuss wedding plans, and now he got three hours for a haircut and the wedding. Normally those under house arrest cannot receive visitors, excepting specified doctors and clergymen.

The wedding faced the judiciary with a problem, because the accused is a sort of non-person, but note what happened. Prager was married by a Johannesburg magistrate, and the newspapers were interested because of his status. But they could not say if he said, "I do," for a detained person may not be quoted.

There was no wedding reception, because Prager cannot attend gatherings, and the happy couple had a cup of coffee in a cafe before going home. His wife had a special dispensation, permitting her to live with him.

Whether this marriage can be saved, as the magazines put it, no one can say, but that's their problem.

What is the problem of all free men is how a nation gets itself into so preposterous a position. In most free societies, if you commit a crime you serve your sentence, and are paroled, with some rights restored. That is called prosecution.

But the South African system is manifestly one of constructive persecution. It differs materially from our parole system, in that it is a form of passive torture. Whether an offender in his lifetime can ever escape it is doubtful, as no limit is set to administrative law.

This is not a discussion of the right or wrong of apartheid, but of the weird and dooming results of such fanatical racism, where dissent all but destroys you even when you can find a jury to acquit you of an overt act.

1870s, he was raised in poverty and an atmosphere of superstition, ignorance and humiliation. He rose on his own bootstraps, to actor, journalist, character, and writer of naturalistic prose too hot to handle in the century's early years. He depended on a long succession of women to help him write, a strange tactic that often resulted in artistic disaster, if sexual triumph.

Swanberg sets it down in perhaps too great detail. Yet once I was caught up in the tormented giant's saga, I could not ignore a word of it. Whether "Dreiser" will win any prizes is not important at the moment. I feel it must be the American biography of the year.

Swanberg's book is solely biography, not literary criticism. It is an analysis of a remarkable egotist and second rater who nevertheless was able to produce Jennie, Carrie and the Clyde of "An American Tragedy." He did valiant battle against stockian attacks by petty minds. He wrote trash and edited women's fashion magazines to survive. He engaged in a lifelong battle with publishers, most of whom lost money on him. He would do just about anything for money himself but, failing as a capitalist, he embraced the Communist cause in his last years — an embarrassment to the Communists, as it turned out, because the bull-headed Dreiser never really knew what they were all about.

There is no explaining the man, who had a touch of genius in his make-up, but, in equal measure, had an almost suicidal desire for chaos in his personal life. Grievance was essential to him. He had to fight something, whether censors, publishers, film producers, women, or his incredible self. Perhaps this had its beginnings in childhood where, in Indiana of the

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WILLIAM HOGAN

Successful Writer Was Failure as Human Being

The greatest and for long the only champion of Theodore Dreiser as a literary force was his old friend and mentor H. L. Mencken. But even this friendly critic noted that Dreiser had "an insatiable appetite for the obviously not true." Mencken was being kind. Actually, Dreiser was an out-and-out liar, a cheat, a plagiarist, a relentless promoter of sexual intrigue, an uninformed visionary and an evil man.

In his massive biography, "Dreiser," W. A. Swanberg makes no bones about the writer's failure as a human being. Indeed, there is evidence here that Swanberg does not like the man at all. But as a biographer he is awed and hypnotized by Dreiser's Mephistophelian qualities. Also by the fact that underneath Dreiser's elephantine, exhausting and only occasionally successful prose, he was the bridge between Howells and Hemingway—an American literary giant.

Dreiser's enormous gifts warded endlessly with his grievous flaws. This, in substance, is Swanberg's story. It is a detailed and compelling account of the man and his times, as Swanberg's "Citizen Hearst" was before it. It is a definitive work, like Mark Schorer's "Sinclair Lewis," and the parallel

Strength for These Days (From The Bible)

Give thanks to Him and bless His name. —(Psalms 100:4).

Today let's take time to be thankful for the good in our lives, for the friendliness, expressed by our friends, coworkers, and our family. We are thankful for the opportunities to express God's love and for the many blessings to bring continued good into our lives, so we can live in peace and harmony with our fellow man.

Fast Hearing, Fast Vote: Tax Bill Gets a 'Do Pass'

By PHILIP E. WATSON
Los Angeles County Assessor

What was undoubtedly the most significant tax program in 30 years — the Unruh-Petris bill — came up for its first hearing last Wednesday.

In view of the prestige of the authors of the bill and the many major changes the bill proposes in our income, sales, and property taxes, it was not surprising that almost 400 people deserted the balmy spring weather outside to jam into the big Assembly hearing room.

What might have surprised anyone not familiar with the peculiar ways of a Sacramento legislative session was what happened—or didn't happen—during the hearing.

Most of the 21 Assemblymen on the Revenue and Taxation Committee were on hand when the chairman and co-author, Nicholas Petris, gave the session to order. Also on hand, seated in the first row of the audience waiting to be called as the first witness, was bill's other co-author, Assembly Speaker Jesse Unruh.

But as Petris turned over the chair to Assemblyman Alfred Alquist in preparation to calling on the Speaker, Republican Assemblyman Robert Monagan asked for the floor.

Monagan said publicly what had been buzzing through the Capitol corridors since mid-morning — the Governor had just announced that there was more money in the treasury than had been anticipated and consequently, massive tax increases were not necessary. The State could get along nicely with just a cigarette tax increase for the next two years. "So why don't we just send this big bill to interim study?" Monagan asked ingenuously. "Why do we have to have this hearing and keep all these people tied up on such a nice afternoon?"

He got a laugh from the audience but Petris and Unruh were not much amused. They knew that what Monagan had said was what a lot of people had been saying ever since the Governor's press conference—that the Governor had pulled the rug out from under any major tax program at this session.

But the hearing continued nonetheless. The Speaker, Petris, and Assemblyman Charles G. Rrigus, chairman of the Education Committee, spoke ardently in support of the bill for almost two hours.

Then it was time for other points of view to be heard. One by one, the Committee members slipped away to other Committee meetings or office business, till only a handful were left.

However, no one in the capacity audience left his seat. Before the hearing began, no one appeared to know who intended to testify from the audience, and everyone was waiting now to find out.

The room was filled with familiar faces — representatives of the Assessors' Association, the County Supervisor's Association, the League of California Cities, plus individual representatives from the major cities, the Chambers of Commerce, the schools, real estate, labor, the Farm Bureau, the utilities, banks, railroads, motion pictures, and other major industries, trade associations, the single-taxers.

Each of these groups would be tremendously affected by one or more provisions of the bill. Each of these groups, one might have expected, would have wanted to be on record with its comments and criticisms. Instead, only seven people asked to be heard: The California Real Estate Association opposing the real estate transfer tax; the California Association of Tobacco Distributors opposing any additional cigarette or tobacco tax; the California Farm Bureau Federation opposing the withholding provisions for paying state income tax. The single-tax representative spoke in favor of exempting all property except land from property taxes; the League of California

Cities opposed what they feared would be loss of home rule under the bill. The State Chamber of Commerce urged that no action be taken until a joint Assembly-Senate interim tax study commission could be set up to study the whole package.

We also supplemented the summary with a statement amplifying the Association's positions in support of the bill. Our office had been asked to prepare a de-

HERB CAEN SAYS:

They Stay in Back of Church

CAENFETTI: The week's hottest rumor had Arlene Dahl and Matt Kelly, the S. F. boulevardier, committing merger somewhere south of the border, but it's a case of close, no cigar. Kelly quote: "If I get married again, she'll be the one, but as of now, no" . . . Producer David Merrick keeps saying, "I hate actors, and he proved it here: he refused to appear on Gypsy Rose Lee's TV show—because Charlotte Rae was to be on it, too. She's the female lead in "Pickwick" which, to make a sticky situation even stickier, is produced by David Merrick . . . Bishop James Pike comments thusly on the contemporary scene: "Why is it that most people want the front of the bus, the back of the church and the middle of the road?"

OLD HOME WEEK: Is it too early in the game to get sentimental about Mort Sahl? It has been 12 years now since he opened, at \$75 a week, in the original hungry i, bringing a welcome breath of dank air into the netherworld of saloon humor. The other night, he returned to the i, having gone through a lot of sweaters meanwhile, and it was nice—and nostalgic—to find that he still looks at the world with a fine, bawful eye, giving no quarter, asking none. The baggy sweater, the open shirt, the nervous mannerisms were all there, and the same trademarks: "Right? Right . . . Onward . . . But back to that in a minute" (never turning back). In an hour, he burned up enough material to supply lesser performers for a year, and the brittle cackle failed to soften the anarchy that lurks under the cashmere. And, as has been true since 1953, he talked up, not down, to his listeners. Can an audience ask for anything more?

SINCE we haven't had a Texan in the column for a while, it's a pleasure to report that one sat down in the Fleur de Lys and ordered "The best steak in the house." What arrived was tournedos en feuillete (pastry shell). Texan: "Where's my steak?" Owner Charie Charles: "In there." Texan: "I'll be danged! Wait a minute"—whereupon he went to the cloak room, got a Polaroid camera and took a picture of it, cackling: "Wait till I show the folks back home what you do with steak here." The picture snapped, he handed his plate to Cherie. "Now," he ordered, "take this out to the kitchen and scrape off the dough!" . . . Newsflash in the sports pages: "Albie Pearson will become a father for the fourth time in five weeks." Funny, he didn't look that good in spring training.

ELEGANCE: Lucius Beebe Esq. and Charles Clegg Ltd. hooked their \$100,000 private railway carriage onto the rear of an SP rattle and toiled down to Los Angeles last week. As they were taking the air, a tourist lady asked in wonder: "Is that really your OWN car?" "Yes, momom," purred Lucius. "Since motorcar traffic has become so fierce, most of us have chosen to travel this way." "My," said the lady, "California IS wonderful."

INSIDE OUT: The flood of mail orders having crested, the Beatles' appearance at the Cow Palace Aug. 31 will be a complete sellout — meaning a gross of \$104,700, and about \$68,000, give or take a thruppence, for the mopheads . . . The Tiger a GOGO discotheque at Hilton's airport hotel is such a wild success that Mr. Hilton has commanded copies in the Portland, Boston, Houston, Dallas, Atlanta and Denver Hiltons and the Statler-Hilton in N.Y. . . . F. Sinatra bought the screen rights to N'York's newest big hit, "The Odd Couple," and will film it in S. F. — meaning Frank will play the role of a sportswriter covering the Giants . . . A phony talent agent "booked" the Smothers Brothers for a show at a local college for \$3500 ('way under their usual price), pocketed the \$1750 advance payment and just plain disappeared. The Feds are on his trail — and the Smothers, of course, didn't show up because they didn't know anything about it.

Morning Report:

Our Marines are having it rough in the Dominican Republic and not only because guys are shooting at them. Even rougher is to know who is doing the shooting.

In addition to various democratic parties, there seems to be at least three Communist outfits—one is pro-Russia, another pro-China, and a third is pro-Cuba, which means that it is split between Russia and China.

It's enough to make a hardened top sergeant yawn for the good old days of the Twenties. Things were easy in those days when the Marines landed south of the border. There were only two parties: the "ins" and the "outs." Principles were fewer then; also bullets.

Abe Mellinkoff